lume 12, no. 1

HOLBROOK LIBRARY
PACIFIC SCHOOL
OF RELIGION

september, 1959

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

General Synod Adopts Call, Commends Council Program

The Second General Synod of the nited Church of Christ at its Oberlin eeting, July 5 to 9, took a number of nportant steps attesting its intention that e fellowship shall deal responsibly and rthrightly with the social problems con-onting the Christian conscience today.

On the very day on which a few hours ter it adopted a Statement of Faith hich has been widely hailed for its fresh xpression of Christian conviction, the ynod adopted a *Call to Christian Action Society* setting forth some of the ma-r goals for which our members and nurches are asked to work and pray. Ac-on on this *Call* came after a large num-er of synods, conferences, churches, roups, and individuals had studied the raft submitted by the Council in Febru-ry and had made their recommendations r alterations and additions. In the light f these suggestions the Council had pre-ared a revised draft which, after care-il scrutiny by the Review Committee ppointed by the General Synod to ex-mine the Council's report and discussion y the plenary session, was adopted by ne General Synod without dissent.*

The Synod expressed its commendation f the Council's program at a number of oints and called upon churches and embers to give special attention to the ritical problems of world order in con-ection with the Nationwide Program of ducation and Action for Peace, the in-erdenominational coordinated emphasis for July 1959—June 1960. It gave strong support to the right of the Council to speak openly on public issues in the following resolution:

General Synod commends the Council for Christian Social Action for its activity in the formulation of statements on current complex and controversial issues. Recognizing that there is room within our fellowship for considerable diversity of opinion on such issues and that no one body can speak accurately for all members of the church, the Council for Christian Social Action is encouraged to continue to set forth its views as those of "The Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ."

Since such statements are meant to evoke creative exchange of thought and serve the Lord of the Church by stimulating the mind and pricking the conscience of the Church, its individual members, and those outside the Church, General Synod urges our congregations to utilize these statements to that end.

A longer statement to the same effect, covering pronouncements by any instrumentality of the United Church was recommended by the Executive Council and adopted by the General Synod. A statement on the use of force in international relations, presented by the United Church Peace fellowship, an unofficial group, was referred to the Council for its consideration.

On Tuesday, July 7, the CCSA had charge of the synod's evening program. Dr. Kenneth W. Thompson, of The Rockefeller Foundation, spoke on "Three Challenges for American Foreign Policy."

The General Synod elected the following persons as members of the Council for the six-year term 1959-1965: the Reverend Messrs. George D. Alley, Roy J. Eilers, Emerson G. Hangen, Henry C. Koch, and A. William Loos, Mr. Leonard C. Brecher, Mrs. John C. Bennett, and Judge Constance R. Keller. Mr. Tilford E. Dudley and Mrs. Frank Havice were elected to fill vacancies caused by the resignations of Dr. Percy Julian and Mrs. Paul Tanner.

Celebrate 25 Years

Immediately following the General Synod, the Council held a three-day meeting, at which it elected its officers for the ensuing biennium: Chairman, Professor Hugo W. Thompson, St. Paul, Minnesota; Vice-Chairman, Dr. Henry C. Koch, Washington, D. C.; Secretary, Mrs. F. P. Brasseur, Cleveland, Ohio; Treasurer, Mr. Harold C. Kopf, Orrville, Ohio.

Most fittingly this meeting began with an Anniversary Dinner at the Oberlin Inn, commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Congregational Christian Council for Social Action, organized in the old inn on the same site and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, formed just a few months later. Dr. Alfred Swan and Professor Elmer J. F. Arndt, former chairmen of the two respective bodies, addressed the group; and greetings from friends and former members were read by Dr. Ray Gibbons, Director, and Dr. Huber F. Klemme, Associate Director. The Reverend Albert Penner served as toastmaster, and an honored guest was Mrs. Arthur E. Holt, widow of one of the principal founders of the CSA.

---

*The text of this statement appears on pages two and three of this issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY and is available printed separately on two sides of a single eight-and-one-half by eleven inch sheet, 100 copies to a church free, additional quantities, $2 per hundred.

Call To Christian Action In Society

Adopted by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, July 8, 1959.

Half a century ago the four communions which now form the United Church of Christ joined with others in the Federal Council of Churches to proclaim the Social Creed of the Churches. They summoned the churches to stand for such ideals as the abolition of child labor, the release of workers from employment for one day in seven, the protection of workers from occupational hazards, and the right of employers and employees to organize. Many of these ideals of the churches are now embodied in the social legislation of our nation. This "Call to Christian Action in Society" is an attempt to discover what the Lord requires of us today.

The Gospel is the Good News of what God has done and is doing in the world. In Jesus Christ God entered the arena of human history, grappled with the principalities and powers of evil, won a victory over those powers, and made manifest his love and gracious purpose toward all men. In grateful response, the Christian Church seeks to tell the story of God's action in ways which are persuasive for the men and women of our day.

At the same time, the church responds to God's saving act by seeking His will in all human relationships. For God as revealed in Jesus Christ is the ruler of all human affairs—nations, social orders, institutions. To Him belong our souls and bodies, our possessions and cultures, our churches and communities.

God has made us to live together in community. Without love of neighbor there is no love of God. Without service to men there is no service to God. We live, we rise, we fall as members of one family under God.

We confess the pride and greed which separate us from God and from each other. Before God we repent of our smugness and sloth, our absorption with self and neglect of neighbor. The judgment of God lies upon us and all our affairs.

We rejoice in many signs of the power and grace of God in the events of our time. People are asking recognition of their God-given worth. Barriers between races, classes, and nations are being brought down. We are thankful that God is stirring his people against injustice and oppression.

I. The World Of Nations

We live in a world of nation states, constantly growing in number. This world has become so interdependent and interrelated that nearly every action has an appalling number of relations and effects. The power struggle is therefore greatly intensified, particularly between communist and non-communist states.

Deeper than the divisions, however, is mankind's essential unity under God. Deeper also are the common danger, the common need, the common hope. Nations must therefore develop a larger measure of mutual confidence through more creative use of peaceful methods for relieving international tensions.

In the contemporary situation each nation will inevitably seek to maintain military force at a level considered necessary to national security. We must, however, avoid the militarization of United States foreign policy. We should strive for the development of an effective and enforceable body of international law.

We therefore call upon our churches and their members to pray and work:

For peace, justice, and the welfare of all nations and peoples;

For the United Nations as a major resource for the settlement of disputes, for peaceful change, and for economic and social development;

For a full implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

For creative sharing among nations of persons, ideas, and skills;

For deeper awareness of the problems, legitimate interests, and fears of other peoples, especially those in the newer nations and in nations under communist rule;

For effective international control and reduction of all national armaments, including the testing of nuclear weapons;

For the use of our wealth, personal resources, and trade policies in a world-wide attack upon human misery;

For a clearer demonstration through our own national life that both order and justice can be achieved under free institutions;

For the extension and strengthening of the world-wide Christian community, that it may help to provide spiritual foundations for a world community, combat ignorance, superstition, and traditional social evils, and serve as a reconciling fellowship among all peoples.

II. American Culture

Our cities rise higher. Our suburbs spread afar. Streams of people move from place to place across the land. Astounding inventions provide abundance of goods, swiftness of communication, miracles of healing, and relief from many burdensome tasks. Opportunities for educational and cultural enrichment are multiplied.

In the midst of this abundance, we are beset by much that is trivial, dehumanizing, and vulgar. Prodigious plenty tempts us to selfish indulgence while millions of people in our land and abroad live in want. Private consumption has reached unprecedented levels while public services on which all of us depend are starved. Concentrations of power, controlling the channels of information, beguile masses of people into unthinking conformity and slavish striving for goods that do not satisfy. Much of our leisure time is devoted to forms of entertainment and escape that dull us to the world's problems and our neighbor's need.

We are tempted to love things and use people when we should ve people and use things. And even in the midst of crowds our ves are often empty, anxious, and alone.

Now as always God calls us to a new life that offers genuine eaning, faith, and community. He sets before us goals that are gher than comfort and success. He summons us to develop ir capacities for mental and spiritual growth. He frees us om our bondage to the networks of opinion and taste. He ves us from calling good evil or evil good. He searches the reets of our cities and the by-ways of the countryside—not for e church that takes pride in its popularity, its wealth, or the lendor of its buildings—but for the church that does justice nd seeks truth, that cares for people and loves the Gospel, lift- g up family, community, and world.

We therefore call upon our churches and their members to ray and work:

For a deeper understanding of the Christian meaning of daily work;

For the participation of Christians in organizations of farmers, labor, management, the professions, and other vocations, encouraging democratic procedures, wise practices, and concern for the public interest;

For fuller appreciation of the role, rights, and responsibilities of both organized labor and management in the democratic functioning of an industrial society;

For policies that safeguard the well-being of the farmer and the farm family as well as the interest of the general public in the efficient production of abundant food and fiber;

For the conservation and development of the earth's resources for the benefit of mankind now and in the future;

For economic institutions and practices which provide meaningful work, serve human needs, eliminate blighting poverty, prevent unemployment and harmful inflation, and bring about more equitable sharing in the goods and services which our productivity makes possible;

For action to strengthen the family and counteract the the forces making for family disorganization;

For the support and expansion of necessary public services such as schools, transportation, and health programs;

For increased educational and cultural opportunities for all;

For more effective programs of education and action in church and community on the meaning and effect of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, and gambling;

For the provision of adequate social services for special groups such as the young, the aging, the handicapped, the mentally ill, and the victims of alcohol and drugs;

For the protection of migrant workers and their families;

For the admission of more immigrant refugees and their integration into the American community;

For better methods in the treatment and rehabilitation of those convicted of offenses against the law;

For the use of leisure time in creative avocations, in wholesome recreation, in strengthening family life, in enrichment of human culture, and in service to church and community.

III. Race Relations

Jesus Christ as Lord and Shepherd of all men requires us as his followers to repent of those violations of brotherhood and justice which create separation, tension, and conflict between men of different races and to manifest—within the Church, the Body of Christ, and within the community and nation—acts worthy of such repentance.

We therefore call upon our churches and their members to pray and work:

For the elimination of pride and prejudice from our hearts;

For the end of racial segregation and discrimination in our communities—in church life, in housing, in employment, in education, in public accommodations and services, and in the exercise of political rights;

For the alleviation of poverty, ignorance, illness, and all other handicaps which are aggravated by unequal opportunity and by segregation imposed by law or custom;

For the furtherance of human rights throughout the world and respect for all men as persons created in the image of God.

IV. Political Life

God holds political life under his providence and judgment. It is the area in which men and nations make some of the most fateful decisions of our time. In this process controversy and compromise serve important and necessary functions.

We therefore call upon our churches and their members to pray and work:

For the support of effective, representative, and responsible government;

For active participation of Christians in political life as voters, workers in parties, candidates, office holders, and civil servants;

For the critical evaluation, within the fellowship of the church and in the perspective of the Christian faith, of the policies and practices of candidates, office holders, and political parties;

For a church with bonds of Christian fellowship so strong that it dares to discuss and act upon civic and political issues;

For maintaining the independence of the churches and the state, and for creative cooperation between them.

DEDICATION

To these tasks we dedicate ourselves in the name of God who calls us to seek justice for all his children and to love our neighbor not only in word but in deed. In him is our confidence and our trust.

Copies of this Call may be ordered for use in the churches, 100 free, additional copies $2 per hundred, from

COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

289 Park Avenue South, New York 10, N. Y. or 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio

SOCIAL ACTION CALENDAR

September 6—Labor Sunday.
October 4—World-wide Communion Sunday.
October 18—World Order Sunday.
October 20-22—United Nations — World Order Seminar, New York.
November 6—World Community Day.
January 17-23—Church and Economic Life Week.
January 30-31—Council for Christian Social Action, Buck Hill Falls, Pa.
February—United Church of Christ Month of Emphasis on Christian Social Action.
February 14—Race Relations Sunday.
February 23-26—Churchmen's Washington Seminar.

THE U. N. SEMINAR WILL HELP YOU

The CCSA United Nations—World Order Seminar, to be held in New York October 20-22, will help you in any case. To meet leaders from the United States and from other countries, as well as United Nations officials; to hear able discussions of international affairs from experts inside and outside of public life; to see the world's "town meeting" in session, and to plan what individuals and churches can do for world peace and justice—this is always worth the time and the modest cost.

This year—with the interdenominational Coordinated Emphasis on a Nationwide Program of Education and Action for Peace—it is a "must" in which every congregation and community in our fellowship would want to have a representative. So—before the limit is reached, send your reservation to

The Reverend Herman F. Reissig,
Council for Christian Social Action
289 Park Avenue South
New York 10, N. Y.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

SEPTEMBER, 1959

News and Program Service of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ
Ray Gibbons, Director
Huber F. Klemme, Associate Director and Editor

Sent free to pastors and social action committee chairmen. Group subscriptions, 10 or more to one address, 50 cents each. Individual subscriptions, $2 per year with SOCIAL ACTION upon request.

General communications and orders from Evangelical and Reformed churches should be addressed to the Editor, Council for Christian Social Action, 2969 W. 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

Congregational Christians should order from Council for Christian Social Action, 289 Park Avenue South, New York 10, N. Y.

The Council for Christian Social Action unites the work of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

LABOR'S CONCERNS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Fund for the Republic has made two contributions toward a better understanding of Labor's concerns and responsibilities. One is a 46-page study of the effects of "Right-to-Work" legislation on labor and management relations in Texas, entitled *Right to Work in Practice,* prepared by Frederic Meyers, formerly at the University of Texas and currently at the University of California in Los Angeles.

Mr. Meyers, on the basis of his surveys and interviews, concludes that the "Right-to-Work" legislation, which in Texas dates back to 1947, has not measurably affected the size of union membership. Certain industries which operated under a "closed shop" are still operating under essentially this pattern. In many units 100% membership is still maintained and, in his judgment, the law has had little impact on the rate of union growth nor has the law assured the non-union member freedom from compulsion and coercion promised in the statute.

Perhaps the most serious observable result has been in the area of grievances. Here, "every grievance is a crisis" since the union leadership has lost the advantage of union security and is pressured into making irresponsible demands in order to hold discontented individuals and minorities. The very escape the law offers from unwanted membership in a union discourages the democratic responsibility of participation in the management of union affairs. Thus, the democratization of undemocratic unions is made more difficult.

The author regards the chief result of the legislation as *symbolic,* offering certain conservative business organizations a "victory" over labor and calling forth inevitable resistance from labor for that reason. At this point one might ask whether Professor Meyers has sufficiently considered the possibility that the potential damage to labor has not been actualized because managements which are hostile to labor are reluctant to press their gains until they have succeeded in outlawing the union shop on a more nearly national scale.

However, there is real substance to his view that while "Right-to-Work" laws call attention to the serious question of how we are to achieve freedom in a complex industrial society, they offer us no answer except perhaps a reminder that we must confront the problem on a more relevant level.

Another useful paper published by the Fund is *A New Philosophy for Labor,* by Gus Tyler. Mr. Tyler is director of the Training Institute of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, long considered one of the best examples of a trade union combining militancy and social responsibility. In spite of this connection, or perhaps because of it, he speaks with real understanding of the problems facing the labor movement today, problems including but going far beyond the threat of racketeers "muscling into" union relationships with employers or internal union affairs.

Tyler traces the dual traditions of "business unionism" and "social unionism" in the American scene, with their respective strengths and shortcomings, as well as the new situation reflecting the growth of unions in membership, status, and income. He is not blind to the temptations which accompany these forms of success, but he is too wise to identify a reversal of this growth with social health. He points out, for example, that probably the worst way to combat the underworld in labor is by banning union security: since the gangster does not need a union security clause to get money out of employers and employees, "to the extent that legitimate trade unionism and time-honored trade union methods are outlawed, to that extent will the real outlaw move in to fill the vacuum."

The philosophy he proposes for the labor movement is only hinted at in this bare outline of six paradoxes which he very convincingly develops: social unionism on a pure-and-simple base; politics with a social purpose; professionalization with democratic controls; regular income with public accountability; autonomy with collective responsibility; free trade unionism within a framework of public law.

Single copies of the above studies may be secured free, on request, from Fund for the Republic, 60 East 42 Street, New York 17, N. Y.